

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-21 (Canceled).

22 (New). An apparatus comprising:

a silicon substrate;
a barrier layer over said silicon substrate;
a trench etched into said substrate through said barrier layer;
a dielectric in said trench; and
a plurality of ions implanted into said dielectric layer and said barrier layer, said substrate being substantially free of said ions.

23 (New). The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the dielectric comprises silicon oxide.

24 (New). The apparatus of claim 22 wherein said dielectric is damaged by said implanted ions.

25 (New). The apparatus of claim 22 wherein said barrier layer is formed of silicon nitride.

26 (New). The apparatus of claim 22 wherein said ions are selected from the group consisting of silicon, carbon, nitrogen, and oxygen.

27 (New). The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the upper surface of said barrier layer and said dielectric are coplanar.